

***Examiner's Amendment***

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Fang Liu on 4/30/2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

- In claim 23, starting from in the last line of the claim, replace "50 phr" with --45 phr, and wherein the amount of silica is from 15 phr to 35 phr and wherein the elastomeric matrix further comprises a coupling agent and/or a covering agent--.
- Cancel claim 37.
- In claim 38, line 2, delete the word "further".
- In claim 39, line 1, substitute "Claim 37" with --Claim 23--.
- In claim 40, line 1, substitute "Claim 37" with --Claim 23--.
- In claim 41, line 2, substitute "40 phr" with --35 phr--.

***Statement of Reasons for Allowance***

The present claims are allowable over the closest prior art JP 09-302146, Sandstrom et al (&S 5,394,919), Segatta et al (US 6,776,206), and Matsuo (US 5,929,157) for the following reasons:

The present claims are drawn to a pneumatic tire comprising in its bottom zone comprising a bead, an elastomeric internal filler mix in the form of a profiled member which is located axially to the outside of the upturn of the carcass reinforcement or a reinforcement profile for the beads of the tire which is located radially above the bead wire and adjacent to said bead wire, wherein the elastomeric internal filler mix comprises a composition comprising an elastomeric matrix, a coupling and/or covering agent, and 15-45 phr of a reinforcing filler blend that consists of carbon black (BET between 30 and 160 m<sup>2</sup>/g) and silica (BET between 30 and 260 m<sup>2</sup>/g), wherein the amount of silica is greater than or equal to the amount of carbon black in phr minus 5 phr and is 15-35 phr.

JP 09-302146 discloses a bead filler comprising diene based rubber, 20-150 phr silica having a surface area of 210-300 m<sup>2</sup>/g, and 0-50 phr carbon black having a surface area of 50-150 m<sup>2</sup>/g, and silica coupling agent; however, it teaches that the total amount of silica and carbon black is 50-150 phr which is outside the presently claimed range of 15-45 phr.

Sandstrom et al discloses a tire component comprises a rubber composition and a bead for pneumatic tire, wherein the rubber composition comprises rubber, coupling agent, 0-40 phr precipitated silica having a BET surface area of 50-300 m<sup>2</sup>/g, and 30-85 phr of carbon black, however, the minimum amount of carbon black cannot provide for a composition with 15-45 phr filler blend like claimed.

Segatta et al discloses a tire with an apex (located axially to the outer side of the carcass poly turn-up) comprising natural rubber, a coupling agent, 20-200 phr carbon black, and 5-25 phr silica, wherein JP 09-302146 teaches suitable surface areas of carbon black and silica in a rubber composition for an apex. However, even though one embodiment of Segatta et al of 20 phr

carbon black and 25 phr silica reads on the presently claimed amounts, these amounts are rendered unobvious given Segatta et al clear preference for relatively higher amounts of carbon black and applicant's own data in the specification as originally filed that shows when the amount of silica is less than the amount of carbon black desired tearability properties are not had (see Test 3 Control), wherein the amount of silica and carbon black in the inventive examples is reasonably commensurate in scope with the scope of the claims.

Matsuo discloses a rubber composition for use in the sidewall portion of a tire comprising diene rubber, coupling agent, 5-50 phr carbon black having a surface area of not more than 130 m<sup>2</sup>/g and 10-60 phr precipitated silica having a surface area of not more than 180 m<sup>2</sup>/g, however, it fails to disclose or suggest the use of the rubber composition in a bottom zone of a tire comprising a bead.

Thus, it is clear that the references, taken individually or in combination, do not disclose or suggest the claimed invention.

In light of the above, it is clear that rejections of record are untenable and thus the present claims are passed to issue.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Vickey Nerangis whose telephone number is (571) 272-2701.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, David Wu can be reached on (571) 272-1114. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

5/5/2009  
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/Vickey Nerangis/  
Examiner, Art Unit 1796